

2023

*Explore*  
Madison  
County

**A publication of The Madison County  
Journal and MainStreet Newspapers**





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# Explore Madison County

## About the Cover



The Madison County Chamber of Commerce held a contest for the cover photo of this year's magazine. The contest winner chose to remain anonymous. Other submissions from the contest are published on page 21.

## About the Edition

Welcome to the fourth edition of *Explore Madison*! This magazine is produced by *The Madison County Journal* in Danielsville, Georgia.

*Explore Madison* encourages our readers to explore the rich history, services, and businesses that make Madison County home. To maintain this strong, vibrant local community, we must actively support our local businesses. Additionally, local government depends on our active participation, whether it is staying informed about local issues or seeking public office. Being personally involved in our community matters to us all. It is in this spirit that this community guide is produced.

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# Madison County, Georgia

## No place like

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# Home

By Zach Mitcham

The two words, “Madison County,” don’t just represent a place on a map. Those words are “home” to the roughly 30,000 people who live here, and “home” holds a lot of hopes and expectations. People want the lush green beauty of rolling hills of farmland, the mom-and-pop shops that offer goods and services, industries that keep property taxes down, and a community of opportunity and pride.

The good life — it’s a balance.

And there are a number of local leaders focused on a careful walk across that balance beam of maintaining the county’s rural integrity, while also generating enough business to have a strong tax base. County citizens and leaders have spent the past year working on a comprehensive plan to serve as a blueprint for Madison County’s future.

Meanwhile, the county Chamber of Commerce is a central player in the work toward a better local future, helping support the existing local business community, working to attract new businesses to the county, organizing collaborative talks on numerous local topics, and putting on a variety of local events. In short, the Chamber is a hub of community activity with both short-term and long-term focus for specific individuals and businesses and the county as a whole.

### A RESURGENCE IN MEMBERSHIP

Chamber of Commerce President/CEO Anna Strickland is steering the Chamber with the help of its board of directors. And the Chamber has seen a tremendous resurgence in membership and energy since Strickland took her position in January 2020, right before covid hit. In that time, the Chamber’s member businesses have grown roughly five-fold, from the 60s to over 300.

Madison County School Superintendent Michael Williams and past Chamber chairman said the energy behind the Chamber’s resurgence has been something to see.

“The growth has been phenomenal and Anna has been the backbone of that since she has taken over as executive director and now the President/CEO of the Chamber,” he said. “And the support for the local businesses and attracting businesses is all part of the Chamber and economic development piece for the county.”

Chamber treasurer Rodney Chandler agreed, noting that “the Chamber has experienced amazing rebirth and renewal, and that is largely attributable directly to Anna.”

“Her presence seemed to awaken a resurgent spirit in the businesses of Madison County,” said Chandler. “The old Chamber had deteriorated to such a state that many businesses — mine included — withdrew from membership. But I, like many others, were sitting on the sidelines waiting for something to change. Anna was that change. She provided the spark that we all needed. When she began, both new and returning



Tracy Rucker, an investigator with the Northern Judicial Circuit’s District Attorney’s Office, enjoys a plate from JB Catering at the Madison County Chamber of Commerce’s “Taste of Madison County” event in May.

members saw her passion and joined this new Chamber with energy and passion. It has been a pleasure to cheer her along as she leads the Chamber to an exciting future.”

### ‘WHERE WE’RE MEANT TO BE’

Strickland, who grew up in Ball Ground, Georgia, isn’t eager to talk about herself, and she attributes the energy of the Chamber to the work the board has done to keep the organization going, but ask her about Madison County and what it offers, and the words flow. She said she’s been drawn to Madison County since her days as a student majoring in ag communications at the University of Georgia. She met her husband, Tyson Strickland, a veterinarian in Comer, while the two were at UGA, and the two used to take rides through the county, admiring the beauty of the place. The two now live in Comer with their daughter, Harper Ann. And Strickland’s parents, David and Karen McIntyre, have moved nearby, too.

“It just seems like all roads have led to Comer and all roads have led to

Continued on next page



Members of the Madison County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and Chamber Director Anna Strickland are pictured on the Red Raider football field. Pictured (L-R) are Rodney Chandler, Martin Kimsey, Jeff Dillard, Strickland, Jean Mullis, Emily Nix, Rob Cushard and Thomas Harrell. Not pictured are Byron Lee, Michael Williams, David Echols, Jill Parham, Nathan Coker, Kim Shupe and Erica Roquemore.

Madison County,” said Strickland. “It’s just a feeling I’ve always had. I have always felt that this county was special and have always felt drawn to it for some reason. I just feel like it’s just kind of where we’re meant to be.”

Strickland said it’s easy to see why many others believe the county is where they’re “meant to be.” She said selling the county as a good home is easy.

### THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

“First and foremost, the school system is a point of pride that deserves much praise,” she said, noting the many opportunities the system provides to Madison County students. The system has been ranked tenth in Georgia for the past two years, according to Niche.com, which uses a variety of factors to rank schools, including academics, teachers, clubs and activities, diversity, college prep opportunities, administration, food, sports, facilities and health and safety.

Williams noted that the Chamber is helping improve the system, too, helping prepare students for the workforce.

“The Chamber has never been more active than it is now with our students and workforce development through our college and career academy and the Chamber,” said Williams. “And we’re just so appreciative of her work as well as Dr. (Paul ‘Bo’) Boykin’s and Mrs. (Sarah) Waldrop, our work-based learning coordinator. But Anna’s role, she’s

just been phenomenal. It’s only gotten better. It’s only going to get better moving forward and we’re at such a good place now.”

### THE AG IDENTITY

Strickland said Madison County’s identity is deeply rooted in agriculture, and the Chamber aims to work with local agriculture entities on promoting the industry. She said that listening to the community during

the comprehensive planning work of the past year made one thing clear: people love the natural beauty of Madison County, which is rooted in the ag industry being strong.

“We know that agriculture is an economic driver and so given our local economy depends on its vitality, we want to let it continue to be, and any future industries that come in need to complement our economic driver and our economic base,” said Strickland. “That’s been such a priority that it’s woven into our mission statement.”

While the schools and the rural beauty of the county are sources of local pride, Strickland said the biggest selling point for Madison County is its people.

“I think what really makes a difference here and what you’ll hear I’ll hear from Chamber members and multiple communities in our region, they tell us, you know, what really stands out about Madison County is the quality of relationships,” she said. “And they can tell that people really want to get to know them and really want to make them feel welcome them into the community. And so that’s something

“I think if we can achieve a greater sense of pride for where we’re from and where we do business, I think that’s success.”

— Anna Strickland,  
Chamber President/CEO

Continued on next page



that is, it's very easy to promote."

### THE FUTURE OF THE COUNTY

The comprehensive planning sessions of the past year have been attended by many community members who desire to see the county hold its rural character but also thrive for generations to come.

Strickland said the Chamber board is also engaged in that process. She said a primary Chamber initiative is to promote agri-tourism in the county and to help revitalize downtown areas in Madison County's municipalities, while promoting a business-friendly atmosphere and enhanced quality of life.

"We're talking right now with a couple of other counties and state partners about establishing a Georgia-grown trail along Hwy. 98," she said. "I would like for people in 20 years to continue to appreciate our agricultural roots and its importance. We also look forward to the revitalization of our downtowns, and we're working on numerous projects right now with

our city partners to promote tourism. That's huge for us to be able to collect those dollars. This goes along with the 'MADICO-MADE' brand in promoting the people, places and products that make Madison County unique. You want people to hear the name Madison County and smile and be able to list some notable attractions and some notable businesses and have had a positive experience there."

### A LIFE'S WORK

Strickland said improving the county is a multi-faceted effort including many people taking an active role in their community, and she said she's committed to being a part of that team effort for the long haul.

"Unless everyone gets tired of me and decides that someone else needs to be in this role, I plan to retire in this role," she said. "I'm so grateful this opportunity and in that sense, I do think this is my life's work."

Strickland thanks the board, local partners and Chamber members for investing in the

future of the community through their support of the Chamber.

"The organization would have no purpose without their commitment," she said.

Williams said the Chamber is in a "much better place than it ever has been." He said Strickland is a fierce advocate for the county and its betterment over time.

"She's a workhorse and she has a vested interest here in Madison County and that's extremely important as well," he said. "She wants to see the county prosper and it's not just a position for her. It's an investment for her."

Strickland said she wants each citizen in the county to feel pride in "Madison County" equaling "home."

"In 20 years I want people to be very proud that they live, they work, they play, they were born, etc. in Madison County, Georgia," she said. "I think if we can achieve a greater sense of pride for where we're from and where we do business, I think that's success."

## From the Chamber:

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•**Better Customer Service** – Local business owners are passionate about their businesses and want to be connected to the community. This often contributes to better and more personal customer service.

•**Helps Our Community Grow** – Keeping tax dollars in our community and creating demand will help encourage new businesses and help the county grow.

•**More Support for Nonprofits** – Studies show that nonprofits receive 250 percent more support from small businesses than larger businesses.

•**Connect with your Community** – Shopping locally encourages people to purchase from businesses that are unique. This enables you to connect with people in the community and learn about things going on around you.

— from *MetroFamily Magazine*



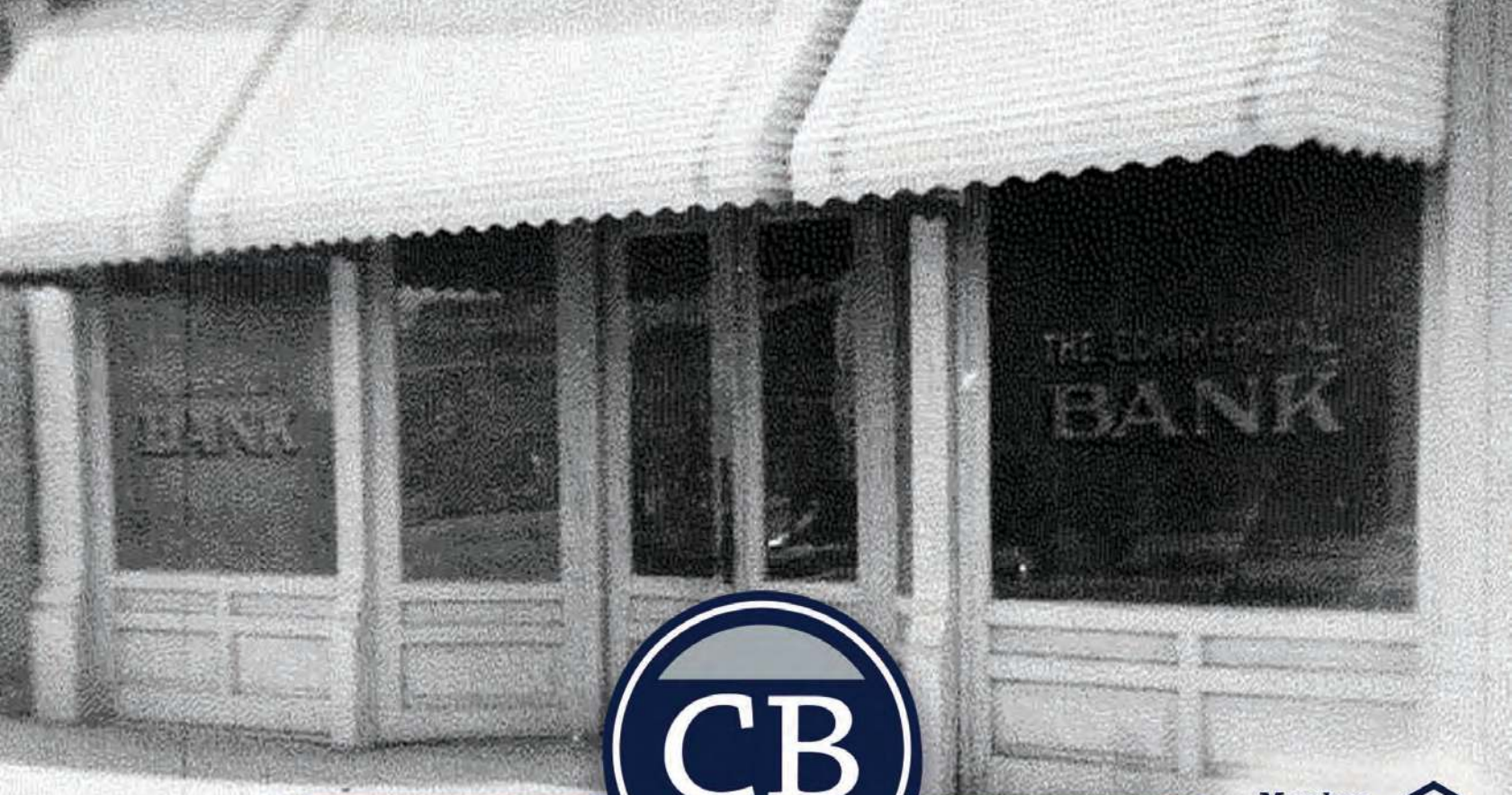
Finley (L) and Hadley Segars, both 4, of Ila are pictured with "Teddy" at the Madison County Pioneer Harvest Festival at the Comer Fairgrounds in November.

## Contact the Chamber

"Please don't hesitate to reach out to the Chamber if we can ever be a resource to you. Visit [www.madisoncountyga.org](http://www.madisoncountyga.org) or call 706-795-2191 ext. 1453. Thank you for making it a MADICO MADE Day!"

— Chamber President/CEO Anna Strickland





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The rising stars recognized as Madison County's next generation of community leaders include (L-R): Dr. Tyson Strickland, DVM, Owner Veterinarian, Comer Veterinary Hospital & Custom Livestock Solutions; Emily Nix, Chief Operations Officer, Mercy Health Center; Nathan Coker, Operations Manager, Stanfield Air Systems; Jill Parham, Relationship Manager, The Commercial Bank; Dylan Chandler, Insurance Agent, Madison County Farm Bureau.

# Madison County 'Top 5 in 5 Young Professionals to Watch'

The Madison County Chamber of Commerce recognized its 2022 group of Madison County's Top 5 in 5 Young Professionals to Watch.

"The Top 5 in 5 initiative is designed to cultivate and showcase exceptional Madison County young professionals," said Anna Strickland, Chamber Executive Director. Coordinated by the Chamber, this recognition program focuses on Madison County residents under age 40 who are considered to be Madison County's up and coming leaders over the next 5 years.

"We were extremely pleased with the number and caliber of candidates for this year's recognition. With this being our first year, we were blown away by the candidates who submitted applications. Each application was carefully reviewed by a panel of judges that found the task of only choosing five honorees challenging," shared Chamber Board Chair Kim Shupe,

Coldwell Banker Upchurch Realty - The Shupe Team.

Judging criteria included past professional achievements and awards, five-to-10-year professional goals, letters of recommendations from people in the community, as well as the nominees volunteer and community activities. Besides being recognized during the Chamber's Quarterly Breakfast, the recipients will also be featured in The Madison County Journal and will be nominated for Georgia Trend Magazine's 40 Under 40 Award.

"The focus of the Madison County Chamber centers on our role as the go-to organization to serve as the catalyst for community and economic development," said Chamber leaders. "We exist to connect our citizens, organizations, and businesses with the resources they need to make Madison County thrive."

# 2023 Chamber of Commerce Membership Directory

Scan the QR code to visit  
<https://business.madisoncountygga.org/directory>  
 for more information about each member.



*Members in good standing as of 1/26/2023*

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Alyssa Filkins Photography  
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 Fieldale Farms Corporation  
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 Georgia Soil Company  
 Honey Harvest Farm, LLC  
 Honey Pond Farm  
 Iron Pin Ranch  
 Jaemor Farms  
 Lionheart Construction, LLC  
 Madison County Cattlemen's Association  
 Madison County Extension  
 Madison County Farm Bureau  
 Middle Of Nowhere Farm LLC  
 Midway Farm Supply  
 Moon Farms  
 Poultry House Solutions LLC  
 South Fork Hunting Preserve  
 Still Water Farm

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Camp Kiwanis, BGCMA

Double Oaks Golf Club  
 Eighteen22 Venue  
 Franklin Community Players  
 Grant Hill Farms

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 Carquest Auto Parts of Danielsville  
 Ingram Diesel Services  
 Madison County Collision Clinic  
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 West Fleet Services, Inc.

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 Hometown Interiors  
 Hudson River Studio  
 Ila Hardware  
 Joyce's Floral & Co.  
 Lola Jane Boutique  
 M.T. Sanders Furniture Co., Inc.  
 Madison County Ace Hardware  
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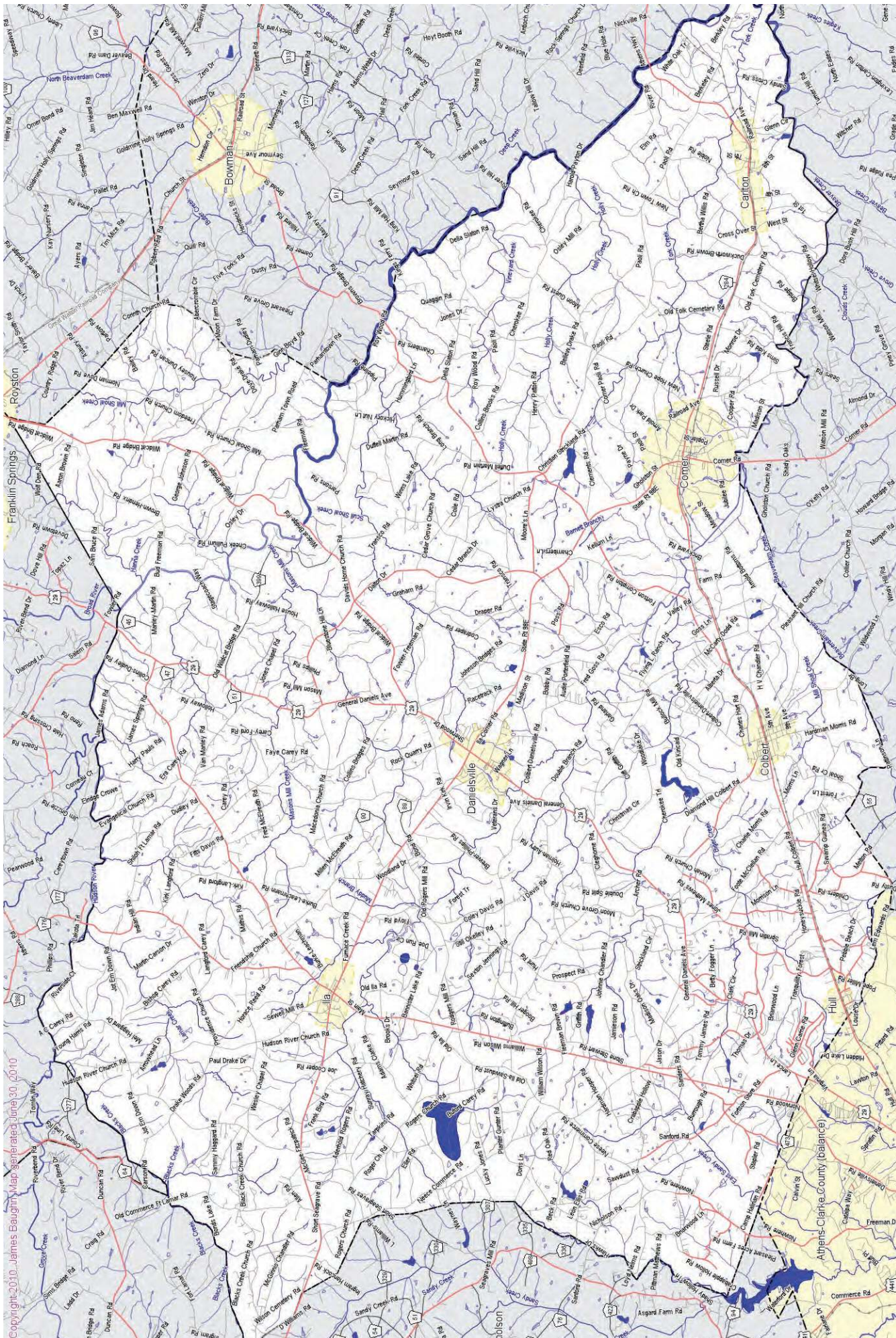


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# Madison County, Georgia





# Ag Center

## Moving from dream to reality

**By Zach Mitcham**

There's no Madison County Ag Center yet, just an open field, but that will soon change. After years of planning, ground is expected to be broken in coming months on the first phase of a flagship county site, a place where youth will learn about a variety of ag careers, and where community events — ag related and otherwise — will be held for years to come.

A student livestock housing facility will be built on a 25-acre plot of land off Hope Thompson Lane and Madison Street across from Madison County High School. That will be followed by an ag education center with a show arena that can be used for agriculture and community events.

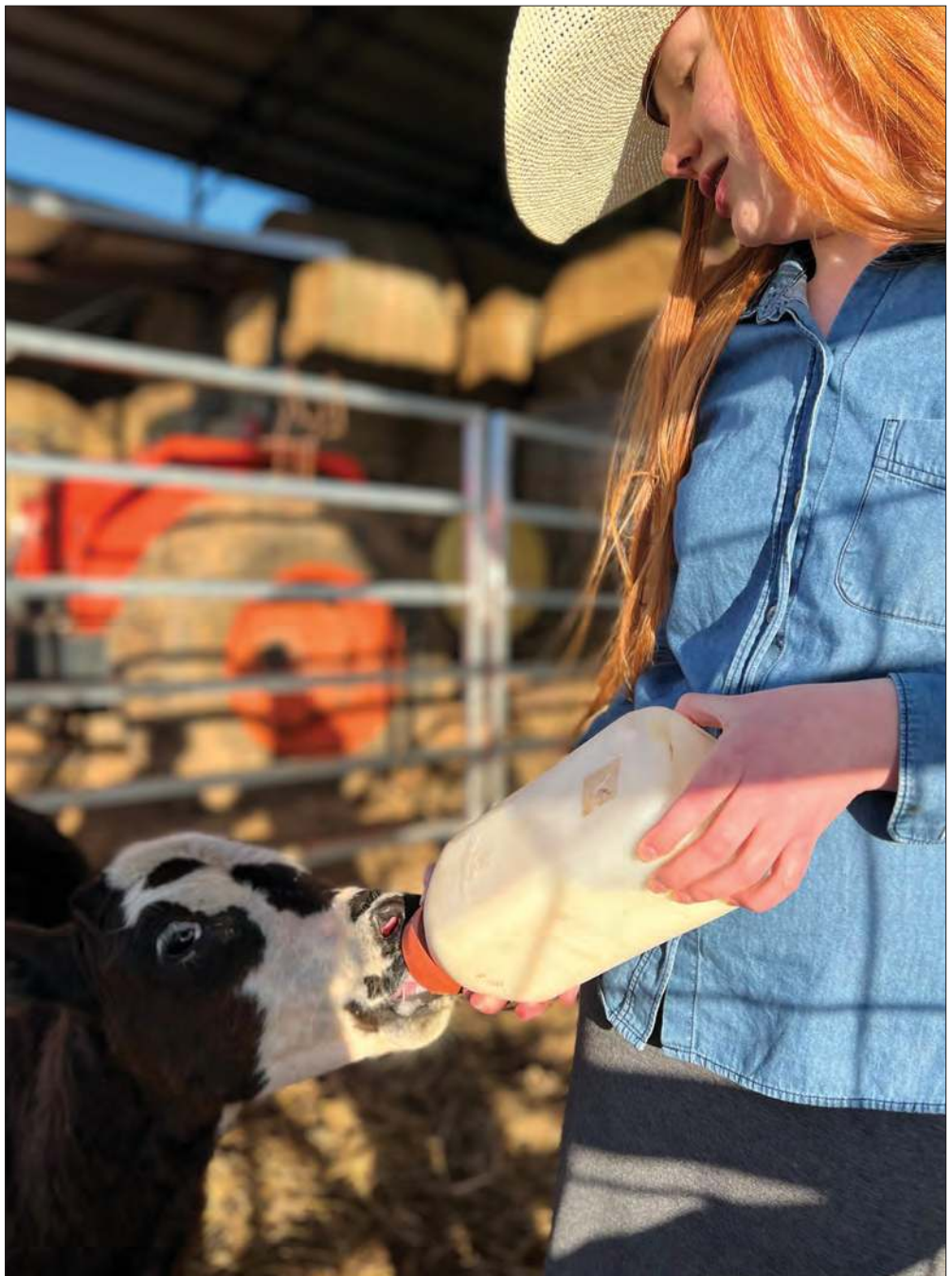
Terry Chandler, a farmer, county commissioner and ag center committee member, visualizes a “beehive of activity.”

“We really expect this is going to be an activity center for everything going on in the county,” he said. “We think this is going to be just a hub of activity, even in my mind more than big athletic events. It’s going to be so all encompassing and done in such a way that can have an unbelievable number of uses, not just limited to ag, not just limited to students. The potential uses are off the charts.”

He envisions a constant stream of activity, including livestock shows, but much more.

“Think of auto shows, farmers markets, non school-sponsored wrestling events, pickleball tournaments, anything like that that needs some room and a big indoor space and place for people to gather,” he said. “It could potentially be weddings, family events, all those kinds of things, professional exhibits, farm equipment, professional training, fire department training.”

And he sees it as an upcoming economic engine in the county, with people traveling into Madison County to use the facilities and visit local businesses while here, bringing in tax

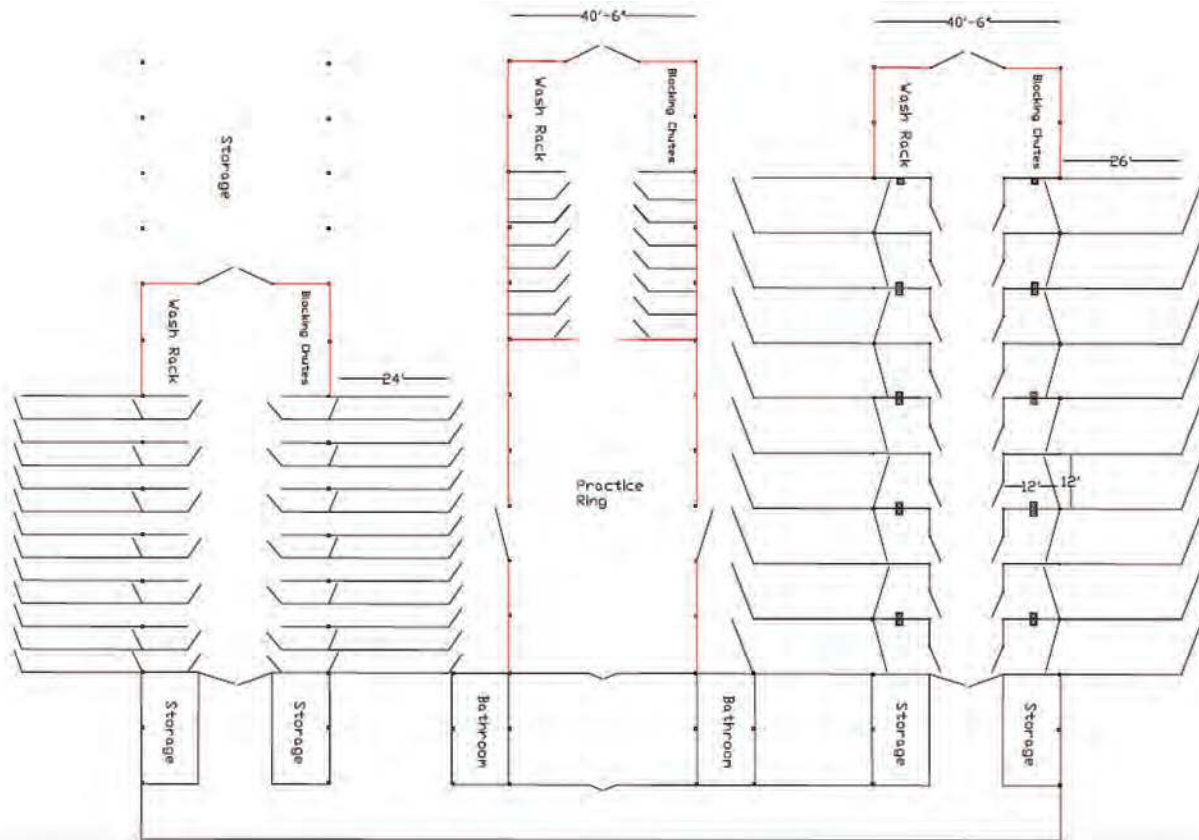


A student livestock housing facility will be the first phase of the ag center process. Pictured is Madison County's Augusta Harrell.

**Continued on next page**



## Student Livestock Housing Facility — a sketch



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[dancahilljr@glflawyers.com](mailto:dancahilljr@glflawyers.com)



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revenue.

Cindy Jones, a farmer, high school ag teacher and ag center committee member, agrees. She said the center will go beyond agriculture and boost the local economy.

“We want this to be as multi-purpose as we can so that it works for agriculture, but it also works as a community building where people can utilize it for other purposes,” she said. “And it will be an economic development piece, building something attractive enough and usable enough so that people want to come to our facility and by doing that we bring other people into our community.”

### STUDENT LIVESTOCK HOUSING FACILITY

Jones said students have been trying to come up with a catchy name for the planned livestock facility, but as of right now, it’s the “Student Livestock Housing Facility.” Jones said the facility will be a game changer for many youth interested in agriculture.

“We’re a rural county, but most of our students are not farm kids,” she said. “They don’t come from working farms and there are a lot of different ways for students to achieve success, but this is a great one, where they have a livestock project that they’re in charge of. They have to manage it. They go in that show ring. And we’re just there to support them. And this student livestock housing facility, the first phase of this is going to give all of those students those kinds of opportunities. And we’re excited about that.”

The livestock housing facility will include three 40’-by-156’ barns for cattle, pigs and sheep and goats with another structure turned lengthwise in front of the barns that will serve as a front-porch area with room for instruction, storage and restrooms. The facility will be large enough to handle at least 78 animals.

“This concept will be very conducive to whole family involvement, which we encourage,” said Chandler.

Jones said students will learn about animal science principles and much more.

“It’s employability skills,” she said. “It’s responsibility. It’s dependability and appropriate behavior with each other and with adults. It just teaches a lot.”

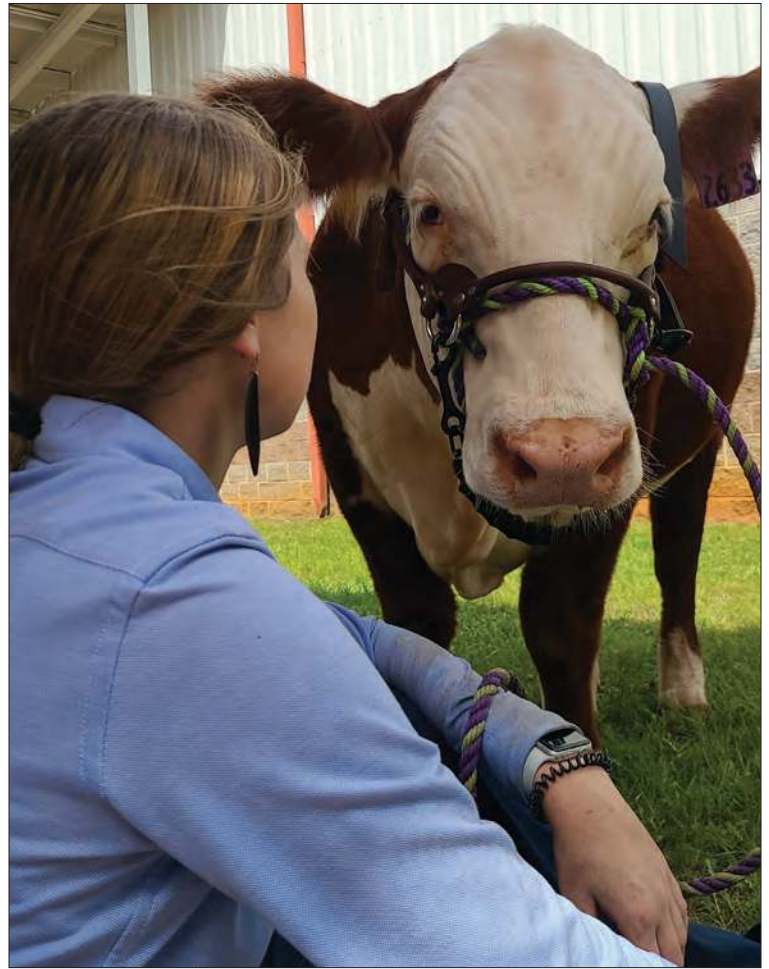
Jones said she sees many good things happening in the livestock housing facility.

“It’s going to be appealing, attractive, clean and well managed,” she said. “It will be something that all of our community can proud of. It’s like walking into a nice gymnasium and going wow, what are they doing for these kids that are playing ball? And this is just another avenue to help kids be successful and maybe find out what they want to do with their lives. We have so many kids who come through the program who discover agriculture through these livestock projects. And even if 50-60-70 percent of these kids don’t end up in an agricultural career, they understand it, they’re advocates. They’ll be better neighbors to that farmer. And we’ve improved our situation in the ag community just by having someone who understands what we do.”

### A LONG-TIME DREAM

The ag center has been a long-time dream for many in Madison County, with members of the Cattleman’s Association, the Young Farmers Association and the Madison County Farm Bureau joining together to form a committee to spearhead the project, raising funds for over a decade.

The committee purchased 20 acres across from the high school off Hope Thompson Lane and deeded that land to the school system. Another five acres was recently purchased and will also be given to the board of education, with plans for a fine arts facility on that land. In all, the school system will expand its campus by 25 acres.



The Madison County student livestock housing facility will allow students who don’t live on farms to be actively involved in raising animals.

Jones said she has visited ag centers in other counties for years, including in neighboring Jackson County, looking at what’s gone right and what could be better.

“The great thing about this taking 10 years to actually come to fruition is that we have been able to look at a lot of different facilities and talk to a lot of different people and I think our design will reflect the incorporation of the best of all those things that we saw, from making sure the flooring in the animal pinning area is the right finish and not slick and something you can use, to the right pinning design, to trailer parking around the facilities,” said Jones.

### THE COSTS

Chandler said the ag committee initially intended to develop the ag center as a private entity, but the school system would not be able to allocate funds to the center for students in such a setup.

“Government agencies can’t spend money on property they do not own,” he noted.

So the committee provided the school system with the property and donations, a total contribution of approximately \$1 million, Chandler said.

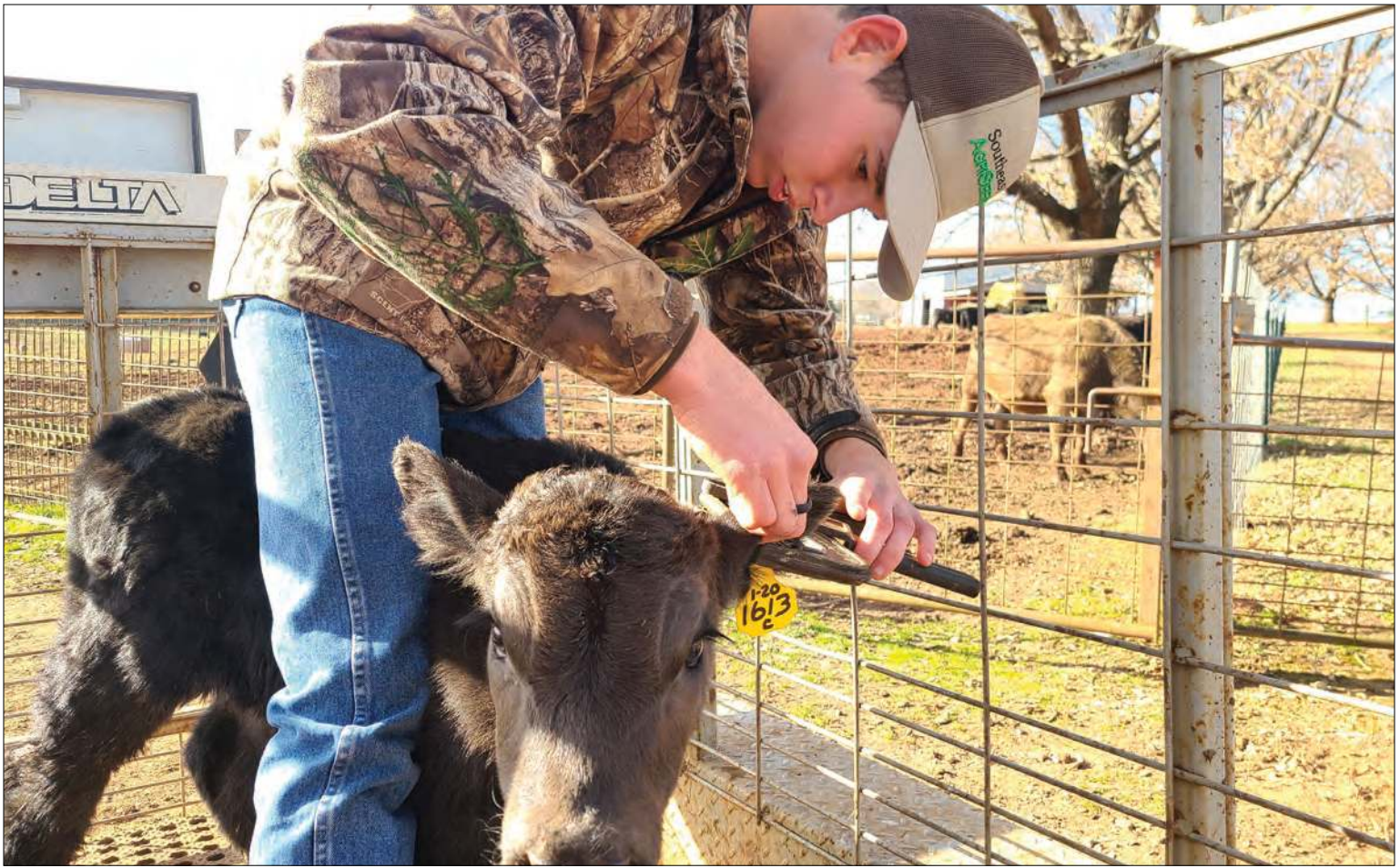
He estimated the cost of the livestock housing facility at approximately \$1 million and the ag center in total at \$8 million to \$10 million. He said the commissioners plan to contribute county funds to the

**“It will be something that all of our community can proud of.”**

**— Cindy Jones, Ag instructor**

**Continued on next page**





Livestock shows will be held at the Madison County Ag Center, but organizers plan for a multi-purpose facility with a wide range of uses.

project. No final figures on that contribution have been set.

Madison County School Superintendent Michael Williams said the school board is in the process of getting pricing for the livestock facility. They board has hired Charles Black Construction as its project manager. The company will put bids out on various aspects of the project, then return with a guaranteed maximum price for the school board. Williams said the more than \$8 million the school system received in federal coronavirus relief funds cannot be used on the facilities.

“That would not be an allowable expense for the school system,” he said.

But he said the schools have money in general funds and can use Education Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (E-SPLOST) money on the livestock facility.

“There are still some things that are to be determined,” said Williams regarding the cost of the facility and exactly how it will be funded. “I can’t give a definitive answer.”

Both Chandler and Jones said they anticipate the livestock facility opening in the fall. Williams said he’s hopeful that the facility can open that soon, but he said there are a lot of construction factors at play and he’s hesitant to set any firm dates on completion.

“That would be great if we could, but I hesitate to say it will be in the fall,” said Williams. “But the ball is rolling and we’re working toward making that student livestock facility a reality.”

Williams said the project includes three phases, with the ag education center construction next on the list and a fine arts center third. Jones said 2025 is a potential date for the ag education center.

“Hopefully around that time,” said the superintendent. “It just depends on SPLOST revenue. We’d like to utilize SPLOST revenue for

the ag center and the fine arts center. Of course we still have a debt with the new high school and renovations. It depends on what those collections are and where we are.”

Williams said he’s excited to see the project moving forward.

“I know this has been in the works for many years, even before I became superintendent,” he said. “And there’s been a lot of work done prior to this point. I’m glad to see that it’s coming to a place where we can hopefully see some construction soon.”

A governing board including members of the school board, the Young Farmers Association, Cattleman’s Association and Farm Bureau will oversee the operation of the ag center.

Chandler said he didn’t have specifics on anticipated annual operating costs, but he said he expects fees generated from the use of the facilities to cover much of the expense.

“We do not look for this to be a drain,” he said.

Chandler and Jones said the ag center campus will include plenty of room for parking. Chandler noted that the county may widen Hope Thompson Lane so that it can be a two-lane road instead of a one-lane path.

Jones said she’s eager to see the “beehive” of activity Chandler envisions.

She said she’ll know when the ag center has truly arrived.

“It’s when we drive up and there are students everywhere,” said Jones. “And there are livestock everywhere, and parents and siblings everywhere. And everyone’s working together and supporting each other and we’re just really facilitating. You don’t direct it. You just facilitate it and let them learn, and I think that’s the way instruction really sticks.”





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Fax: 706-795-2999

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Please take the time to look around our webpage for the information that you need. You can also find out more about the Sheriff's Office on our Madison County Sheriff's Office Facebook page. We can always be reached by telephone at 706-795-2101 or normal office hour 8-5 Monday - Friday at 706-795-6202.

Webpage: [www.madisoncountysheriffga.org](http://www.madisoncountysheriffga.org)  
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Telephone: 706-795-6206

*Sheriff, J. Michael Moore*



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*Madison County, a place of...*

# Natural Beauty



Photo by Sarah Waldrop



Photo by Heather Hammond

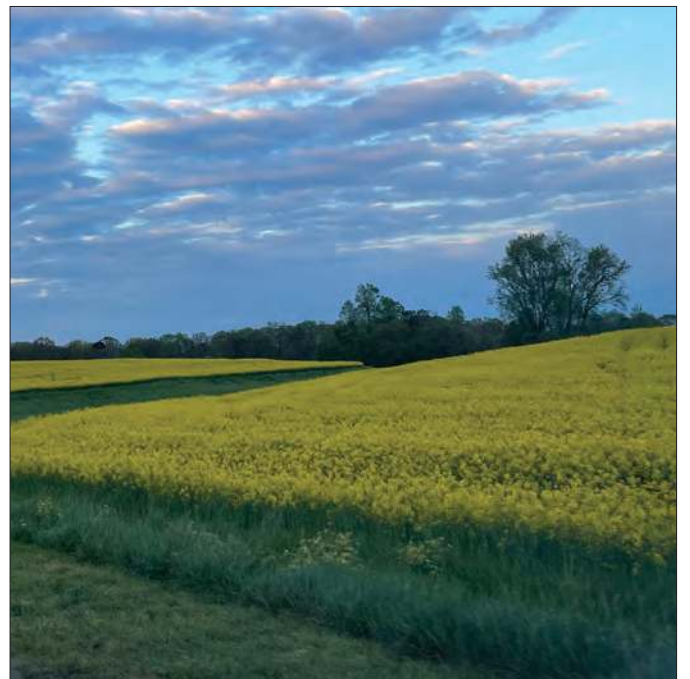


Photo by Heather Hammond



## Local services

### Madison Area Resource Team (M.A.R.T.) Resource Guide

Beginning in 1991, a group of concerned citizens representing residents, agencies, and businesses began to collaborate in an effort to improve services for Madison County residents. In 1994, those involved named the group the Madison Area Resource Team (M.A.R.T.). Over time the collaborative grew and evolved into a formal entity. In early 2000, M.A.R.T. formed a partnership with Family Connection, having applied for a Family Connection grant in 1999.

The M.A.R.T. Collaborative meets monthly. Membership is open to social service agencies, school personnel, policy makers, businesses, churches, and other community members interested in collaborating to address human service and quality of life issues facing families, children, and youth in Madison County. Please contact us at 706-795-3565 if you are interested in attending a monthly meeting.

#### Area Resources

Service	Agency	Phone	Website
<b>Childcare/ Preschools</b>	Easterseals of North GA	706-795-2092	<a href="http://www.easterseals.com/northgeorgia/">www.easterseals.com/northgeorgia/</a>
	Happy Kids Learning Center	706-546-8611	<a href="http://www.happykidslci.com">www.happykidslci.com</a>
	Little Lambs Learning Center	706-395-6470	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/littlelambslearningcenter/">www.facebook.com/littlelambslearningcenter/</a>
	Madison County Early Learning Center	706-795-5611	<a href="http://www.madison.k12.ga.us/Domain/12">www.madison.k12.ga.us/Domain/12</a>
	The Busy Box	706-795-2951	<a href="http://www.thebusybox.com">www.thebusybox.com</a>
	The Learning Train Academy	706-714-3427	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/Learning-Train-Academy-720765571337441">www.facebook.com/Learning-Train-Academy-720765571337441</a>
<b>Children/Youth Activities</b>	Madison County 4-H	706-795-2281	<a href="http://www.extension.uga.edu/county-offices/madison/4-h-youth-development">www.extension.uga.edu/county-offices/madison/4-h-youth-development</a>
	Madison County Library	706-795-5597	<a href="http://www.athenslibrary.org/madison">www.athenslibrary.org/madison</a>
	Madison County Rec Dept	706-795-6270	<a href="http://www.madcorec.com">www.madcorec.com</a>
<b>Clothing</b>	Colbert First Baptist Church	706-788-2214	<a href="http://www.colbertbaptistchurch.org">www.colbertbaptistchurch.org</a>
	Danielsville Baptist Church	706-795-3548	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/DanielsvilleBaptistChurch">www.facebook.com/DanielsvilleBaptistChurch</a>
	Gordon's Chapel Baptist Church	706-548-6616	<a href="http://www.gordonschapel.com">www.gordonschapel.com</a>
<b>Dental Services</b>	MedLink	706-521-3113	<a href="http://www.medlinkga.org/services/dental/">www.medlinkga.org/services/dental/</a>
<b>Disability</b>	GVRA (Employment)	844-367-4872	<a href="http://www.gvs.georgia.gov">www.gvs.georgia.gov</a>
	Multiple Choices	706-850-4025	<a href="http://www.multiplechoices.us">www.multiplechoices.us</a>
	NE GA Regional Commission-Area Agency on Aging/Disability Services	706-583-2546	<a href="http://www.negrc.org/aging">www.negrc.org/aging</a>
<b>Education/ Training</b>	ACTION, Inc	706-546-8293 ext. 42	<a href="http://www.actionathens.org">www.actionathens.org</a>



	Athens Tech	706-355-5000	<a href="http://www.athenstech.edu">www.athenstech.edu</a>
	NE GA WorkSource GA	706-369-5703	<a href="http://www.negrc.org/workforce-development">www.negrc.org/workforce-development</a>
<b>Employment</b>	ACTION, Inc	706-546-8293 ext. 42	<a href="http://www.actionathens.org">www.actionathens.org</a>
	GA Dept of Labor Career Center	706-583-2550	<a href="http://www.dol.georgia.gov/locations/athens">www.dol.georgia.gov/locations/athens</a>
	GVRA (Disability Employment Services)	844-367-4872	<a href="http://www.gvs.georgia.gov">www.gvs.georgia.gov</a>
<b>Food Assistance</b>	Madison County DFCS (Food Stamps)	706-795-2128	<a href="http://www.dfcs.georgia.gov/locations/madison-county">www.dfcs.georgia.gov/locations/madison-county</a>
	Madison County Food Bank (list of other county sites available)	706-795-5465	<a href="http://www.madisoncountygga.us/home/food-bank">www.madisoncountygga.us/home/food-bank</a>
<b>Health Insurance</b>	Madison County DFCS (Medicaid)	706-795-2128	<a href="http://www.dfcs.georgia.gov/locations/madison-county">www.dfcs.georgia.gov/locations/madison-county</a>
	Marketplace Coverage	1-800-318-2596	<a href="http://www.healthcare.gov">www.healthcare.gov</a>
<b>Health Services</b>	Madison County Health Dept	706-795-2131	<a href="http://www.publichealthathens.com/wp/clinics/health-departments/madison-county">www.publichealthathens.com/wp/clinics/health-departments/madison-county</a>
	Madison County WIC Center	706-795-3231	<a href="http://www.publichealthathens.com/wp/clinics/health-departments/madison-county">www.publichealthathens.com/wp/clinics/health-departments/madison-county</a>
	MedLink	706-788-2127	<a href="http://www.medlinkga.org/location/colbert">www.medlinkga.org/location/colbert</a>
	Mercy Health Services	706-425-9445	<a href="http://www.mercyhealthcenter.net">www.mercyhealthcenter.net</a>
<b>Housing Assistance</b>	ACTION, Inc	706-546-8293 ext. 42	<a href="http://www.actionathens.org">www.actionathens.org</a>
	Ninth District Opportunity	N/A	<a href="http://www.ndo.org/web/madison.html">www.ndo.org/web/madison.html</a>
	The ARK United Ministry Outreach Center	706-548-8155	<a href="http://www.athensark.org">www.athensark.org</a>
<b>Mental Health Services</b>	Advantage Behavioral Health	1-855-333-9544	<a href="http://www.advantagebhs.org">www.advantagebhs.org</a>



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	Pathways Transition Program	404-378-2300	<a href="http://www.pathwaystransitionprograms.com">www.pathwaystransitionprograms.com</a>
	Project Family	706-705-2881	<a href="http://www.projectfamilygeorgia.com">www.projectfamilygeorgia.com</a>
	Stephanie Higdon, LCSW, CAADC	706-795-0056	<a href="http://www.mindingyou.net">www.mindingyou.net</a>
<b>Senior Services</b>	Madison County Senior Center	706-795-6250	<a href="http://www.madisoncountygga.us/home/senior-center">www.madisoncountygga.us/home/senior-center</a>
	NE GA Regional Commission-Area Agency on Aging	706-583-2546	<a href="http://www.negrc.org/aging">www.negrc.org/aging</a>
<b>Substance Abuse</b>	Celebrate Recovery/ Danielsville Baptist Church	706-795-3548	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/DanielsvilleBaptistChurch">www.facebook.com/DanielsvilleBaptistChurch</a>
	Colbert AA Group/Colbert Baptist Church	N/A	<a href="http://www.negaaa.org/colbert-group-aa-group-in-colbert-ga">www.negaaa.org/colbert-group-aa-group-in-colbert-ga</a>
	Reboot Jackson	706-708-2259	<a href="http://www.rebootjackson.com">www.rebootjackson.com</a>
	Stephanie Higdon, LCSW, CAADC	706-795-0056	<a href="http://www.mindingyou.net">www.mindingyou.net</a>
<b>Support Services</b>	Caregiver Support/ Athens Area Comm Council on Aging	706-549-4850	<a href="http://www.accaging.org/services/caregiver-support">www.accaging.org/services/caregiver-support</a>





	Georgia Legal Service Program	706-227-5362	<a href="http://www.glsp.org">www.glsp.org</a>
	Grandparents Raising Grandchildren/Athens Area Comm Council on Aging	706-549-4850	<a href="http://www.accaging.org/services/caregiver-support/grandparents-raising-grandchildren">www.accaging.org/services/caregiver-support/grandparents-raising-grandchildren</a>
<b>Victim Services</b>	Harmony House (Child)	706-245-8700	<a href="http://www.harmonyhousecacsac.org">www.harmonyhousecacsac.org</a>
	Project Safe (Domestic Violence)	706-543-3331	<a href="http://www.project-safe.org">www.project-safe.org</a>
	The Cottage (Adult Sexual Assault)	706-353-1912	<a href="http://www.northgeorgiacottage.org/adults">www.northgeorgiacottage.org/adults</a>
<b>Volunteer</b>	Madison County Habitat for Humanity	706-783-8086	<a href="http://www.mcghfh.org">www.mcghfh.org</a>
	Madison County Mentor Program	706-795-2191 ext. 1469	<a href="http://www.madison.k12.ga.us/studentsupport">www.madison.k12.ga.us/studentsupport</a>
	Madison County Senior Center	706-795-6250	<a href="http://www.madisoncountyga.us/home/senior-center">www.madisoncountyga.us/home/senior-center</a>

\*Call "211" or visit [www.unitedwaynega.org](http://www.unitedwaynega.org) (United Way of NE GA) for additional resources not included on guide.

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<b>Animal Shelter</b> 706-795-2868	<b>Code Enforcement</b> 706-795-5685	<b>Industrial Authority</b> 706-795-9865	<b>Planning and Zoning</b> agendas and minutes 706-795-6340	<b>Recycling Center</b> 706-795-3222
<b>Board of Assessors</b> 706-795-6355	<b>Cooperative Extension</b> 706-795-2281	<b>Keep Madison County Beautiful</b> 706-795-5151	<b>Probate Court</b> 706-795-6365	<b>Road department</b> 706-795-6260
<b>Board of Commissioners</b> 706-795-6300	<b>Coroner</b> 706-567-0517	<b>Madison County Emergency Alert System</b> 706-795-2934	<b>Property Valuation Office</b> 706-795-6355	<b>Senior Center</b> 706-795-6250
<b>Board of Registrars</b> 706-795-6335	<b>Emergency Medical Services</b> 706-795-6280	<b>Madison County Library</b> 706-795-5597	<b>Public Safety Communications</b> 706-795-0893	<b>Sheriff's Office</b> 706-795-6202
<b>Building Inspection</b> 706-795-6350	<b>Finance Office</b> 706-795-6304	<b>Magistrate Court</b> 706-795-6375	<b>Purchasing Department</b> 706-795-6305	<b>Solid Waste Transfer Station</b> 706-795-3222
<b>C.H.A.M.P.S.</b> 706-795-6207	<b>Food Bank</b> 706-795-5465	<b>Occupation Tax</b> 706-795-6350	<b>Recreation Department</b>	<b>Tax Commissioner</b> 706-795-6385
<b>Clerk of Courts</b>	<b>Human Resources</b>		<b>Technology</b> 706-202-5973	

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Fax: (706)795-2997  
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**Derek Doster, District 5**  
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Phone: (706)521-2141  
ddoster@madisonco.us

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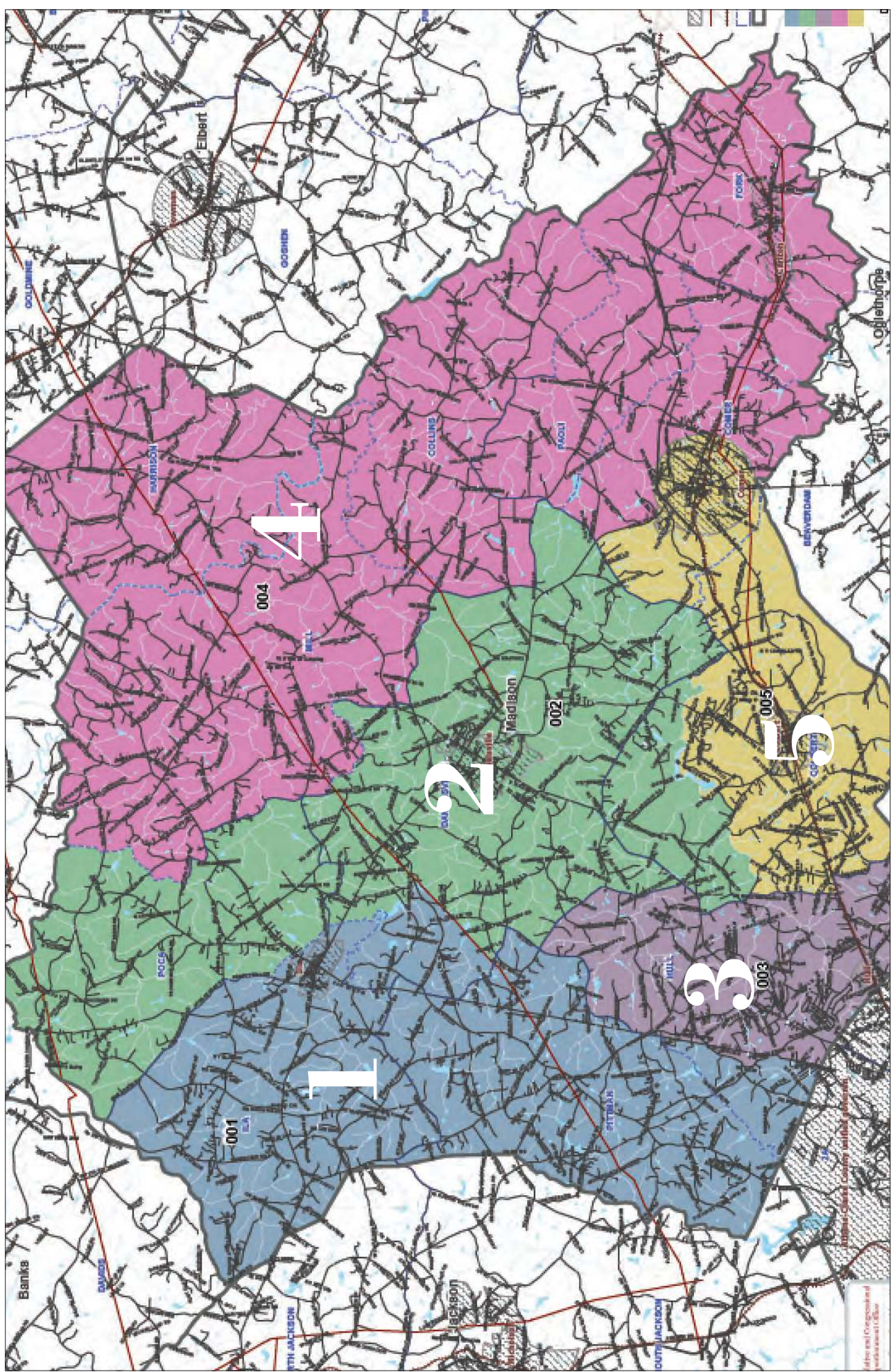
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# BOC, BOE District Map





## Public safety

### Sheriff's Office

The Administrative Division of the Madison County Sheriff's office is located at 1436 Hwy 98 W Danielsville. The office is open Monday - Friday from 8 a.m to 5 p.m. If it is before or after hours, or you need a deputy to be dispatched to your location, call the 9-1-1/Communications Center at 706-795-2101 for immediate assistance. This Administrative Office is the office to call for a copy of an accident or incident report.

The Jail Division maintains the jail for the county. It is responsible for housing inmates and the security of the facility. This division also processes bonds and transports inmates to court appearances, medical/dental facilities and state detention facilities.

The Criminal Investigations Division is responsible for follow-up and investigation of crimes that are reported in Madison County.

The Uniform Patrol Division is the most visible division of the Madison County Sheriff's Office. This division is responsible for answering all calls for service, traffic enforcement, serving civil papers and conducting security checks throughout the county. It is divided into four shifts, each working 12-hr./day to provide 24-hour protection.

The Training Division is responsible for maintaining training records for all officers, offering classes so that officers can meet the statutory required 20 hours of training per year.

### Danielsville Police Department

10 Government Circle  
Danielsville  
706-795-5512  
706-795-2731 (fax)

### Comer Police Department

70 Sunset Avenue  
Comer



706-783-0077  
706-783-3378 (fax)

### Emergency Medical Services

Ambulances are dispatched from the central facility in Danielsville and stations are located in Comer, Danielsville, Hull/Sanford and Ila. The county has an E-911 Emergency System to facilitate access to emergency care.

Telephone: 706-795-6280 Fax: 706-795-2980

EMS Station 1  
1578 Highway 98W, Danielsville, GA  
EMS Station 2  
169 Laurel Avenue, Comer, GA  
EMS Station 3  
5170 Danielsville Street, Ila, GA  
EMS Station 4  
9175 Fortson Store Road, Hull, GA

### Fire Departments

There are 11 fire departments that serve Madison County, all of them staffed by dedicated volunteers. In case of fire, citizens should call E-911 for assistance.

**Carlton VFD**  
27 Seventh Street  
Carlton

### Comer VFD

412 East Sunset Avenue  
Comer

### Colbert VFD

150 N. Third Street  
Colbert

### Collins VFD

8631 Hwy. 172  
Comer

### Danielsville Volunteer Fire Department

60 Government Circle  
Danielsville

### Harrison VFD

3710 Wildcat Bridge Road  
Royston

### Hull VFD

20 Daniel Street  
Hull

### Ila VFD

5170 Danielsville Street  
Ila

### Neese-Sanford VFD

7276 Neese Commerce Road  
Hull

### Poca VFD

1706 Hudson Rivers Church Road  
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### Shiloh VFD

2149 Jones Chapel Shiloh Road  
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is open in Comer, GA.**







Madison County is in the process of updating its 20-year comprehensive land use plan to help steer the county's growth and preservation efforts. Hearings have been held over the past year to get the public's input on what they want to see in Madison County.

## The Vision Statement

"Madison County is a dynamic community that enjoys strong ties to the surrounding region while preserving its own charm, style and pace. The citizens' vision focuses on the desire to maintain the county's rural and natural qualities by preserving agriculture and environmental resources, industry and business growth, infrastructure and residential development should be directed into cities and other planned development nodes, thus allowing economic growth that can support services needed by residents. Madison County will be a place where citizens can live and work and take pride in their community."

Madison County residents share their views during a workshop at the Shiloh Volunteer Fire Department.





## Schools



Ben Doster pumps his fist after getting his diploma during the 2022 Madison County High School graduation ceremony.

The Madison County Charter School System serves approximately 5,000 students who reside throughout the district with five elementary schools, Madison County Middle School, Madison County High School, the Broad River College and Career Academy and the Madison County County Early Learning Center.

## Board of Education

The board of education meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at 800 Madison Street, Danielsville

- **District 1:** Robert Hooper, chairman, 706-255-5264, [bhooper69@windstream.net](mailto:bhooper69@windstream.net)
- **District 2:** Dan Lampe, 770-601-5331, [dlampe@madison.k12.ga.us](mailto:dlampe@madison.k12.ga.us)
- **District 3:** Cindy Nash, vice chair, 706-549-1279, [nashfamily06@yahoo.com](mailto:nashfamily06@yahoo.com)
- **District 4:** Byron Lee, 706-338-3174, [byron-jlee2016@gmail.com](mailto:byron-jlee2016@gmail.com)
- **District 5:** Brenda Moon, 706-224-0670, [moon-brendar@gmail.com](mailto:moon-brendar@gmail.com)





**April Pass, a second grade teacher at Comer Elementary School, is congratulated by her family after being named the Madison County systemwide 2022-23 “Teacher of the Year” in July.**

## Madison County Schools

### **Colbert Elementary School**

255 Colbert School Road, Colbert

706-788-2341

Principal: Jamie Fahrney

### **Hull-Sanford Elementary School**

9193 Fortson Store Road, Hull

706-353-7888

Principal: Theresa Bettis

### **Madison County High School**

600 Madison Street, Danielsville

706-795-2197

Principal: Johnathan Harris (Interim)

### **Comer Elementary School**

565 Gholston Street, Comer

706-783-2797

Principal: Dr. Amanda Sailors

### **Ila Elementary School**

150 Sewell Mill Road, Ila

706-789-3445

Principal: Missy Andrews

### **Early Learning Center**

800 Madison Street, P.O. Box 37,  
Danielsville

706-795-5611

Director: Michele Barrett

### **Danielsville Elementary School**

900 Madison Street, Danielsville

706-795-2181

Principal: Deana Bray

### **Madison County**

#### **Middle School**

3215 Hwy. 172, Comer

706-783-2400

Principal: Georgia Bullock

### **Broad River Academy**

600 Madison Street, Danielsville

706-795-2173

Principal: Dr. Paul “Bo” Boykin





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# Schools: By the Numbers

•**Schools:** seven total schools, five elementary schools, one middle school, one high school, an Early Learning Center and a Broad River College and Career Academy

•**Students:** 5,067 total students, 2,299 elementary school students, 1,186 middle school, 1,428 high school; 3 percent Asian, 11 percent Black, 13 percent Hispanic, 6 percent Multiracial, 68 percent White, less than one percent Other; 16 percent special education (SPED), 6 percent English as a Second Language (ESOL), 44 percent qualifying for free/reduced lunches, 8 percent gifted

•**Graduation rate:** 94.7 percent

•**Meals:** 646,387 total lunches served, 374,242 breakfasts

served

•**Employees:** 759 total staff members, 319 classified, 440 certified, average experience — 15 years, advanced degrees — 76 percent

•**SAT** — Madison County, 1070 ; Georgia, 1077; U.S., 1038

•**ACT** — Madison County, 22.4; Georgia, 22.6; U.S., 20.7

•**Dual enrollment and AP:** 372 credits earned; 146 AP students, 74.66 percent scored 3+ on exams

•**School bus miles:** 765,600 total miles, 3,934 route miles daily, 708,177 route miles for the year, 57,423 field-trip miles

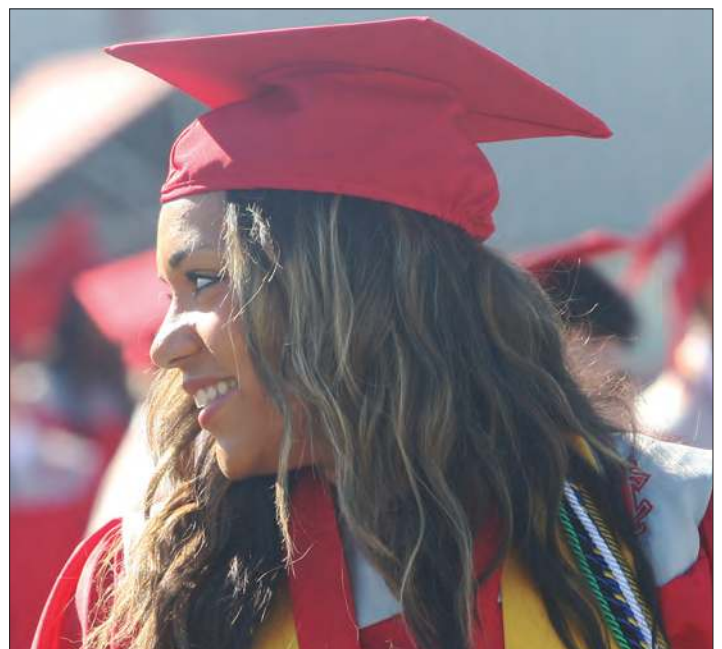
•**Budget:** Total, \$60,038,147; local revenue, \$17,402,934; state revenue, \$39,017,124



The Madison County High School band gives a Christmas performance for the residents of Comer Health and Rehabilitation.



Phoenix Daniel is pictured on the first day of school at Ila Elementary.



Kaylea Wiley is pictured at the 2022 Madison County High School graduation.



## Towns

**Danielsville** was founded in 1812 and designated as the county seat. It was incorporated as a town in 1817 and as a city in 1908. It was named for General Allen Daniel (1772-1836), who served as a Major-General of the Fourth Division of the Georgia Militia (1812-1817) and as both a state senator and a representative of Elbert and Madison counties.

The historic county courthouse on the town square was built in 1901 and is on the National Register of Historic Places. A statue of Dr. Crawford W. Long, a Civil War physician who was born in Danielsville, stands on the courthouse grounds. Dr. Long is recognized as the first physician to successfully use ether as an anesthetic during surgery.

Danielsville is home to a growing population and also serves as the center of most county government and school facilities, including the Board of Education central offices, Madison County High School, the Broad River College and Career Academy, Danielsville Elementary School, Early Learning Center and Head Start.

**Comer** is the county's largest town in terms of full-time residences. It was incorporated in 1893. The motto is "Make Our Town Your Town."

The center of town was designated by the state as a historic district.

It is home to a well-attended annual Christmas parade, held the first Saturday in December. The Madison County Agricultural Fair is held at the Comer Lions Club fairgrounds near Comer every September.

**Colbert** was originally known as "Five Forks" when it was chartered in 1899 because of the five principal roads that met there (near where the traffic signal is now located). Those roads lead to Danielsville, the Diamond Hill Community, Comer, Crawford and Athens.

Today, Colbert is known as the "City of the Red Cannas" and travelers will see these flowers blooming in season all along the downtown area.

The city's name was changed to Colbert in 1909 in honor of the Colbert family, one of the town's earliest residents.

The railroad was built through the town in 1891 and the train depot was constructed in 1892. The depot and the historic downtown are now listed on the

National Register of Historic Places. The train depot has been restored and currently houses Colbert City Hall.

In 1969, the annual Colbert July 4th celebration, parade and barbecue began.

Colbert officials and residents also hold an annual "Christmas in Colbert" celebration every December in the downtown district.

**Ila** is at the western end. The historic outpost of Fort Lamar flourished near the town's present site. Ila was originally settled in 1879 with a post office in a small town named O'possum. Judge Emory Speer acquired approximately 500 acres of land through a lawyer fee which he sold to Dr. George C. Daniel who secured, and named the post office which was fed by a route from Danielsville to Harmony Grove (now Commerce). He later sold the property to Chan Campbell and Llewellyn Thomson, who erected a store and changed the name of the place to Ila in honor of a little girl of the community. The change of name from O'possum to Ila has been dated to circa 1882-1883. During the 1880s, Dr. George W. Westbrook joined them and the area grew into a small community. The land was incorporated as the town of Ila in 1910. Ila covers 0.81 sq. miles. The town was the first event on a busy Madison County Christmas schedule in 2021, holding its event at the end of November.

**Hull** is located at the southern end of the county, just at the Athens-Clarke County line. Hull is known as the "Well City" from a long-standing water well (now capped off, but prominently marked) at the center of town that folks from all around used to provide water to themselves and their livestock. Hull is the county's smallest city, but is a busy thoroughfare for commuters. Hull's first post office was known as "Dowdy."

**Carlton** is the youngest of the county's towns, incorporated in 1970. It contains a number of historic homes and churches, many of them located along Railroad Avenue. Watson Mill State Park is located nearby, with its covered bridge, hiking and horseback riding trails, picnic and recreational areas. The town was reportedly named for Dr. Henry Carlton, of Athens.



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**MedLink Colbert**

11 Charlie Morris Rd  
Colbert, GA



# *Madison County...* The happening place



The Colbert Fourth of July Parade has been held since 1969.



Carlton residents enjoy the town's tree decorating event in December.



The Madison County High School Band marches in the Comer Christmas Parade.





Millie Pugh, 4 months, is greeted by Clay Davis, 6 months, while Ellie Bates, 14 months, stands by at the Madison County Recreation Department Easter Egg Hunt.



Danielsville Christmas festival goers enjoy a hayride.



Kimberly Morgan and Sophia Morgan, 6, Ila, enjoy some roasted marshmallows at the Ila "Hometown Christmas" festival.

## MADISON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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- HIV Testing
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- Pregnancy Testing
- STI and TB Testing & Treatment
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- Women's Physical Exams

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Friday	8 am - 2 pm	

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Makenzie McLendon, 1, Danielsville, enjoys the sweet taste of a funnel cake at the Madison County Agricultural Fair in September.



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## County landmarks



If you're going to "Explore Madison County," then one of the "must-see" destinations is Watson Mill Bridge State Park, which includes the longest covered bridge in the state, spanning 229 feet across the South Fork of the Broad River.



## Courthouse history

— excerpt from Paul Tabor's "The History of Madison County, Georgia," page 30. The book is available at the Madison County Library:

"Madison County has had three courthouses on the public square. The first was built in 1813 or early 1814, the second in 1834 and the present one in 1901. No record has been found of the kind of construction and cost of the first. It was probably a log house built for about \$500 and paid for with money from the sale of lots in Danielsville. The second courthouse was a frame building costing about \$2,400 and paid for by increased taxes. Benjamin Towns was the builder. A rail fence enclosed the square to keep out hogs, cattle, horses and sheep. The third courthouse was built by a contractor, Fred Wagener, for \$18,314.50. With the architect fee added the total cost was about \$22,500. This amount was provided by a bond issue that required two elections for approval and about ten pages of legal papers for validation. The county had not sold bonds previously. The brick for the courthouse and jail built a few years before were burned locally. They were above average in quality. Construction costs were low because the prices for materials and labor were low."



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